

STARBLAZER

SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 53

14p



SAMURAI WARRIOR

STARBLAZER

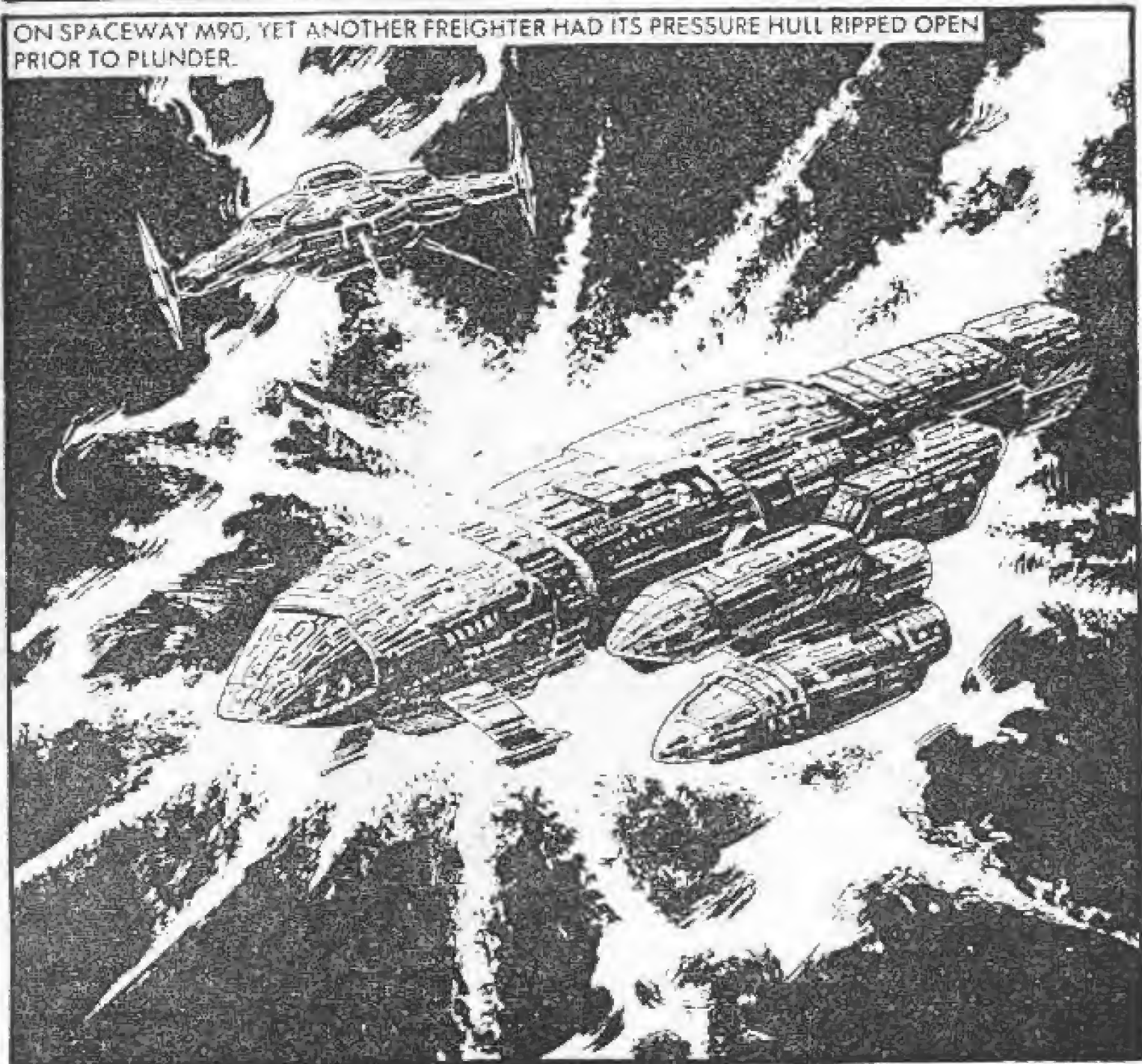


TEN YEARS
OF GALACTIC
WAR, WHEN EARTH
FOUGHT TO PREVENT
THE MEGAKILLERS OF
LUTYEN 7

FROM DOMINATING THE
GALAXY, HAD PRODUCED
A BILLION FIGHTING
MEN. A PEACE TREATY
WAS SIGNED, BUT THE WAR
HAD LEFT ITS SCARS ON THOSE
WHO FOUGHT IN IT. PROFESSIONAL
SOLDIERS WHO KNEW NOTHING BUT DEATH
AND DESTRUCTION DRIFTED AIMLESSLY.
SOME TURNED TO CRIME—LIKE THE
MARAUDERS WHO RAIDED AND PLUNDERED.
SOME BECAME SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE,
MERCENARIES, WHO SOLD THEIR SERVICES
TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER—LIKE THE
SAMURAI WARRIOR.

SAMURAI WARRIOR

ON SPACEWAY M90, YET ANOTHER FREIGHTER HAD ITS PRESSURE HULL RIPPED OPEN
PRIOR TO PLUNDER.



ON ANOTHER SPACEWAY THE S.O.S. WAS RECEIVED BY A FREIGHTER ON WHICH YOUNG SPACE PILOT MARK KRANE WAS SERVING.

UNIVERSAL DISTRESS BEACON.
SKIPPER, SECTOR ZULU 501—M90.

THAT'S GOING TO TAKE US OUT OF OUR
WAY. SORRY, MARK. I KNOW HOW
ANXIOUS YOU ARE TO GET BACK AND
START YOUR LEAVE.

THAT'S ALL
RIGHT, SIR.

THEY ARRIVED TOO LATE.

SENSORS INDICATE NO
LIFE SIGNS ABOARD, SIR.

LOOK AT HER ENGINE PODS. THOSE ARE LASER
BURNS. THE MARAUDERS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE.
AND THOSE SWINE GIVE NO QUARTER.

REPORT THIS TO THE
FEDERATION SECURITY CORPS.



TAKE HER HOME, MARK.



THE MARAUDER INCIDENT WAS FORGOTTEN WHEN MARK VISITED HIS PARENTS ON THE FARMING PLANET, SPIROS-IV.

JUST RELAX, MARK. AND ENJOY YOUR LEAVE.

GOOD FOOD AND A PERFECT CLIMATE. YOU GET SO PALE WORKING OUT IN SPACE ALL THE TIME.

NEARBY WAS A MARAUDER STARSHIP—THE ONE THAT ATTACKED THE FREIGHTER!

OUR SUPPLIES ARE GETTING LOW, CAPTAIN.

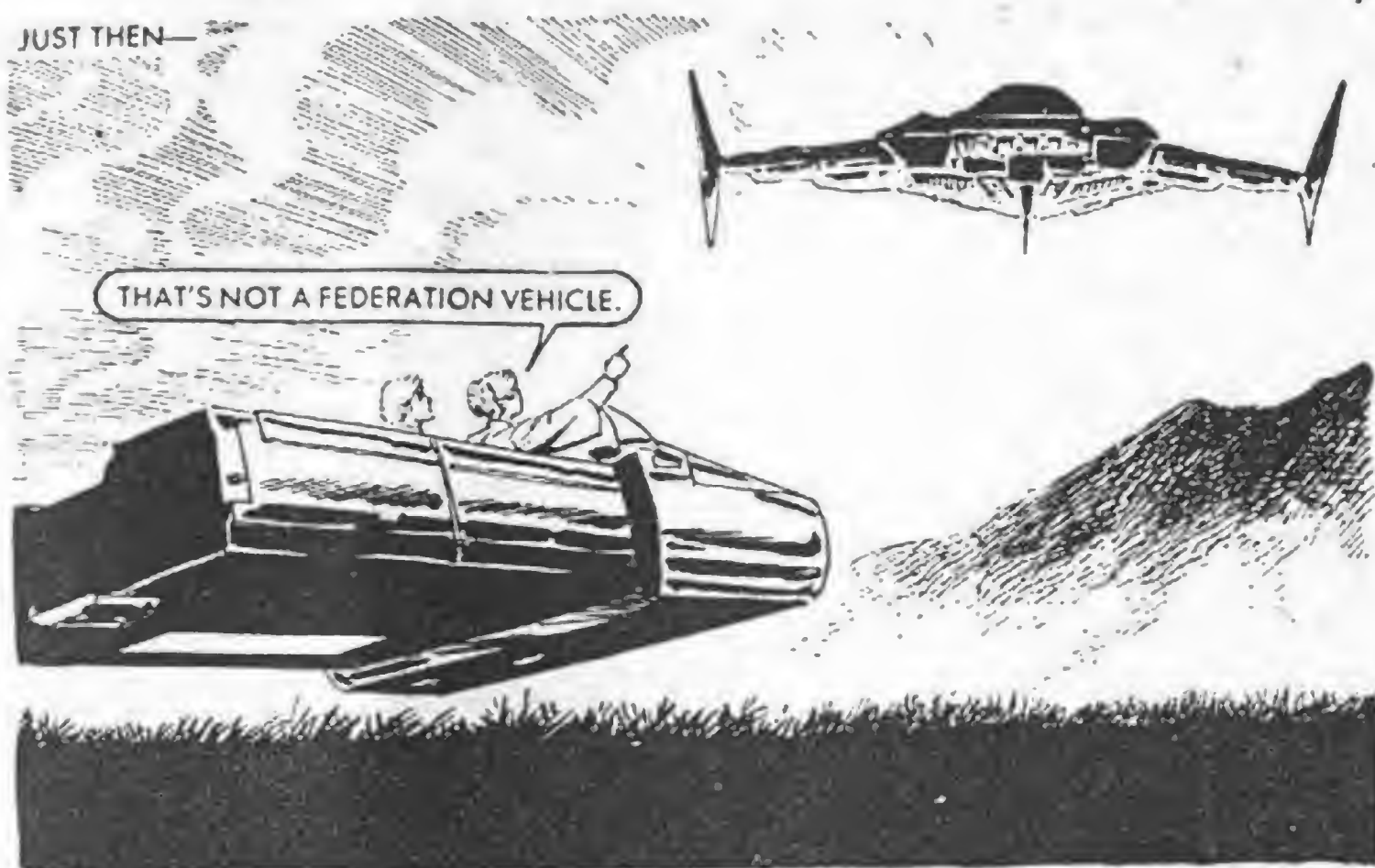
MAKE FOR SPIROS-IV AND WE'LL REPLENISH THERE.

MEANWHILE, ON SPIROS IV

ANOTHER FINE HARVEST, MARK, AND WITH THOSE NEW COLONIES IN THE ALPHA-PROXIMA SYSTEM WE'LL HAVE MORE THAN ENOUGH CUSTOMERS.

AND PLENTY OF WORK FOR FREIGHTER PILOTS LIKE ME, EH?

JUST THEN—



THE AIR CRACKED AS A GAMMA-RAY LASER CUT THROUGH IT.

JUPE'S TEETH! WE'RE
UNDER ATTACK!



A DIRECT HIT VAPOURISED THE FLIMSY VEHICLE IN A BURST OF BLINDING ENERGY.

GET UNDER COVER!

BUT THERE WAS NO PLACE TO HIDE.

NO!



MARK FELT THE SEARING HEAT OF THE GAMMA-RAYS AS HE PLAYED A DEADLY GAME OF HIDE-AND-SEEK WITH THE HOVERING SHUTTLE-CRAFT.



A FEW HOURS LATER, MARK RECOVERED CONSCIOUSNESS.



WHE ... WHERE AM I?
THAT SHUTTLE-CRAFT!





TWO UNITS LATER, AT THE NEAREST HEADQUARTERS OF THE FEDERATION SECURITY CORPS.



THE COLONEL TOOK MARK TO THE OPERATIONS ROOM—

THAT AREA IS CALLED THE FORBIDDEN ZONE—
AND THAT'S WHERE THE MARAUDERS HAVE THEIR
BASE. THEY SAY IT'S NEAR A BLACK HOLE. A
NUMBER OF MY SHIPS HAVE GOT IN—BUT NONE
HAVE RETURNED.

I SEE. THANKS FOR YOUR HELP, COLONEL.
IT LOOKS LIKE I'LL HAVE TO GO IT ALONE.

WAIT A MINUTE! MY BROTHER WAS
IN ONE OF THOSE MISSING SHIPS,
SO I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL. IT'S
A SLIM CHANCE, BUT THERE'S ONE
THING YOU COULD TRY.

I'M LISTENING.

THIS IS STRICTLY UNOFFICIAL—
UNDERSTAND? ON THE PLANET
KALOS YOU'LL FIND THE
MERCENARIES—EX-SOLDIERS FROM
THE GALACTIC WAR. THEY MIGHT
BE PREPARED TO HELP YOU. THAT'S
IF YOU CAN AFFORD IT.

I CAN, DON'T WORRY.

MARK'S FIRST STOP WAS AT THE FEDERATION BUILDING.



THE SALE OF THE FARM AND EQUIPMENT RAISED 1.2 MILLION CREDITS. ARE YOU PLANNING TO RETIRE?

NO—I'M GOING INTO BUSINESS, SORT OF.

A FEW WEEKS LATER MARK WAS ON KALOS, A SMALL PLANET ON THE OUTER REACHES OF THE GALAXY.

SO YOU WANT THE BEST, EH?
BUT HE'S NOT GOING TO COME CHEAP.



I DIDN'T EXPECT HE WOULD BE.
JUST TELL ME WHERE I CAN FIND THIS MAN.

THE PORTER DIRECTED MARK TO A NEARBY HOTEL.



WHAT HAVE WE GOT HERE? SOME RICH MERCHANT'S SON, BY THE LOOK OF HIS CLOTHES.

I'M HERE ON BUSINESS. SO IF YOU DON'T MIND ...



GO HOME KID. WE DON'T ALLOW YOUR SORT IN HERE. THIS IS A PRIVATE CLUB.



MARK FOUGHT WELL...









VERY FRIGHTENED! . . . I'M FRIGHTENED EVERYTIME I FIGHT. THAT'S WHY I STILL LIVE. DO NOT CONFUSE MY CAUTION WITH FEAR.



TELL ME, MY FRIENDS. WOULD ANY OF YOU FANCY A TRIP INTO THE FORBIDDEN ZONE TO EARN SOME MONEY?

I WOULDN'T GO THERE FOR A MILLION CREDITS.

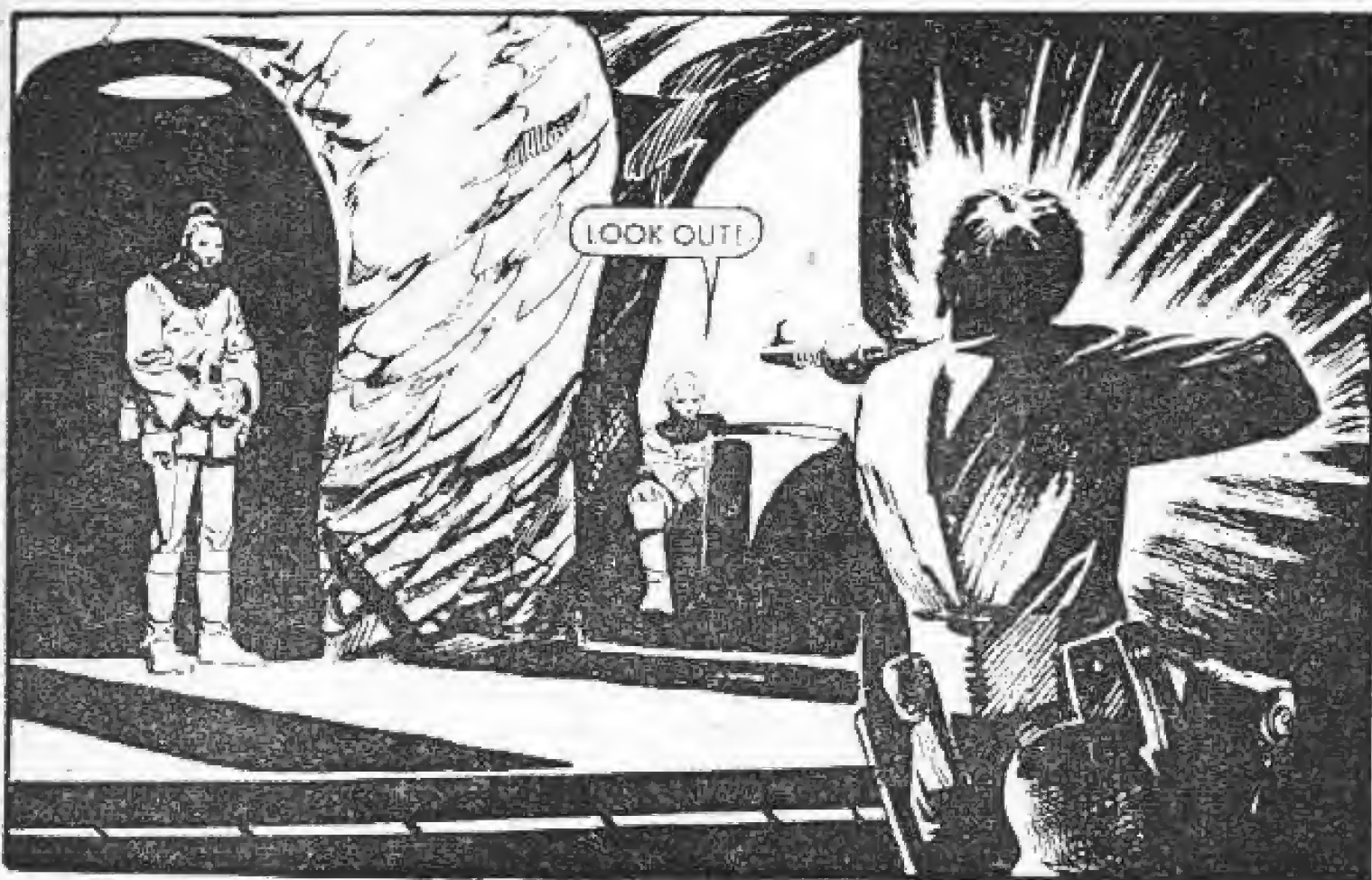


GO BACK TO YOUR JOB, BOY! LEAVE THE MARAUDERS TO THE SECURITY.

I'LL HAVE TO DO THIS THE HARD WAY. JUST GO AROUND THE GALAXY AND HOPE I RUN INTO A MARAUDER SHIP.

WHEN MARK GOT OUTSIDE—

JUPE'S TEETH! THAT
LOOKS LIKE AN AMBUSH.



THE MERCENARY REACTED QUICKLY—



A MAN IN MY LINE OF BUSINESS MAKES A LOT OF ENEMIES. UNDER THE SAMURAI CODE I AM NOW OBLIGED TO REPAY YOUR KINDNESS.

COME.



LATER—

HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO FIRE
A LASER OUT OF YOUR CHEST?

PROSTHETIC LASER WIRED TO MY BRAIN. ALL I
HAVE TO DO IS THINK TO MAKE IT FIRE, AND
NOTHING'S FASTER THAN THE HUMAN BRAIN—
APART FROM A COMPUTER, OF COURSE.

IF YOU WON'T TAKE ME TO THE
FORBIDDEN ZONE, HOW ABOUT
TEACHING ME YOUR TRADE? I'LL PAY
YOU WELL FOR MY TUITION.

MY CODE IS THAT OF THE OLD
SAMURAI. AND TO FOLLOW THE
SAME PATH WILL NEED GREAT
COURAGE. AND THAT'S SOMETHING
YOUR MONEY CAN'T BUY. I HAVE A
DEBT TO REPAY SO I, HAMOTO,
WILL SEE IF YOU ARE WORTHY OF
TRAINING.

THE TEST WAS SIMPLE—MARK HAD TO FLY THROUGH AN ASTEROID BELT ON MANUAL.

THOSE ROCKS WILL BE TRAVELLING AT LAPSE 7.
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT THE NAVIGATIONAL
COMPUTER.

I HAVE DONE IT MYSELF. THE COMPUTER
WILL BE PROGRAMMED TO TAKE CONTROL
IF YOU FAIL TO COPE.

THE OREIL MK III STARCROISER HEADED STRAIGHT INTO THE ASTEROIDS—

FLIGHT TRAINING SCHOOL NEVER PUT US
THROUGH ANYTHING LIKE THIS!

MARK TWISTED A HIGH-SPEED TRAIL THROUGH THE METEOR FIELD.

I RECKON I'VE SCRAPED THE PAINT OFF THE BOTTOM OF
THIS TUB OF YOURS!

THAT'S ENOUGH,
MY FRIEND.



AFTER PULLING OUT OF THE ASTEROID BELT HAMOTO PUT THE SHIP ON AUTOMATIC—

YOU ARE SUITABLE FOR TRAINING—IT IS LONG
AND HARD—I WILL GIVE YOU THE OPPORTUNITY
TO DECLINE.

WHEN DO I START?

HAMOTO TOOK MARK TO A DESERTED PLANET USED BY
THE MERCENARIES AS A TRAINING GROUND.

YOU THINK SLOWLY... DON'T THINK—
REACT... AND SQUEEZE THAT TRIGGER

AS THE WEEKS WENT BY MARK WAS TAUGHT TO USE A WHOLE RANGE OF WEAPONS.

WHAT'S THAT?

ANTI-MATTER GRENADE. EXPENSIVE,
BUT SPECTACULAR. JUST WATCH.



I SEE WHAT YOU MEAN.

IF YOU'RE ON A PLANET WITH EARTH'S GRAVITY YOU
HAVE TO USE THE LAUNCHER. YOU'D NEVER THROW
THEM FAR ENOUGH WITHOUT BLOWING YOURSELF UP
AS WELL!



ONE DAY HAMOTO ANNOUNCED THEIR DEPARTURE.



I CAN TEACH YOU NO MORE ... I
WILL HAVE TO TEST YOUR LEARNING NOW.

THAT SUITS ME, HAMOTO.

THE ONLY WAY TO TEST MARK WAS IN ACTION—AND ON KALOS ACTION WAS NEVER FAR AWAY.

WE REPRESENT THE REBEL FORCES ON
THE PLANET DEAS. AND WE WANT
YOUR HELP TO OVERTHROW THE
TYRANT WHO RULES US. HIS NAME
IS ...



I KNOW HIS NAME—AND HIS CRUELTY.
ONCE WE'VE SETTLED THE QUESTION
OF MY FEE I'LL GET A CREW TOGETHER.

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A DEAL WAS NEGOTIATED—

YOU GET HOLD OF SOME PROVISIONS AND LEAVE THE CREW TO ME. I KNOW THE SORT OF MEN I WANT.

OKAY, HAMOTO. I'LL MEET YOU BACK ON THE SHIP.

PLANET DEAS WAS REACHED SEVEN UNITS LATER.

CONTACT, SIR. READINGS INDICATE FOUR BATTLECRUISERS. TYPE -B6'.

IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE SENT A RECEPTION COMMITTEE TO WELCOME US. SOUND BATTLE STATIONS.

A2-0X3

THE DEASEAN BATTLECRUISERS CLOSED IN.

JUST LOOK AT THE SIZE
OF THOSE THINGS.

WE'VE THE SPEED, KID.
THAT GIVES US A BIG ADVANTAGE.

FORCE SHIELD HOLDING, SIR.
BUT WE'RE STILL OUT OF RANGE.

TAKE OVER THE CONTROLS, MARK.

LASERS LOCKED IN ON TARGETS AND
PHOTON BOLTS READY TO FIRE.

THAT'S IT, KID. THE SOFT
SPOT'S THE BELLY.



SEE WHAT I MEAN— ONE SHOT
AND SHE'S SPACE DEBRIS!

BUT WE'RE STILL OUTNUMBERED BY
THE WEAPONS ON THOSE THINGS.
THEY'RE ARMED TO THE TEETH.

A MERCENARY SHIP WAS HIT.



POOR DEVILS!

THEY KNEW THE SCORE. YOU
DON'T TAKE ON THIS KIND OF
WORK UNLESS YOU'RE PREPARED
FOR THE CONSEQUENCES.



GOT HIM!

YOU WERE RIGHT AGAIN, HAMOTO.
SPEED GIVES US THE EDGE OVER THOSE MONSTERS.

ONE DEASEAN SHIP HEADED OUT INTO SPACE—THE OTHER WAS CRIPPLED.



IT LOOKS LIKE
THEY'VE HAD ENOUGH.

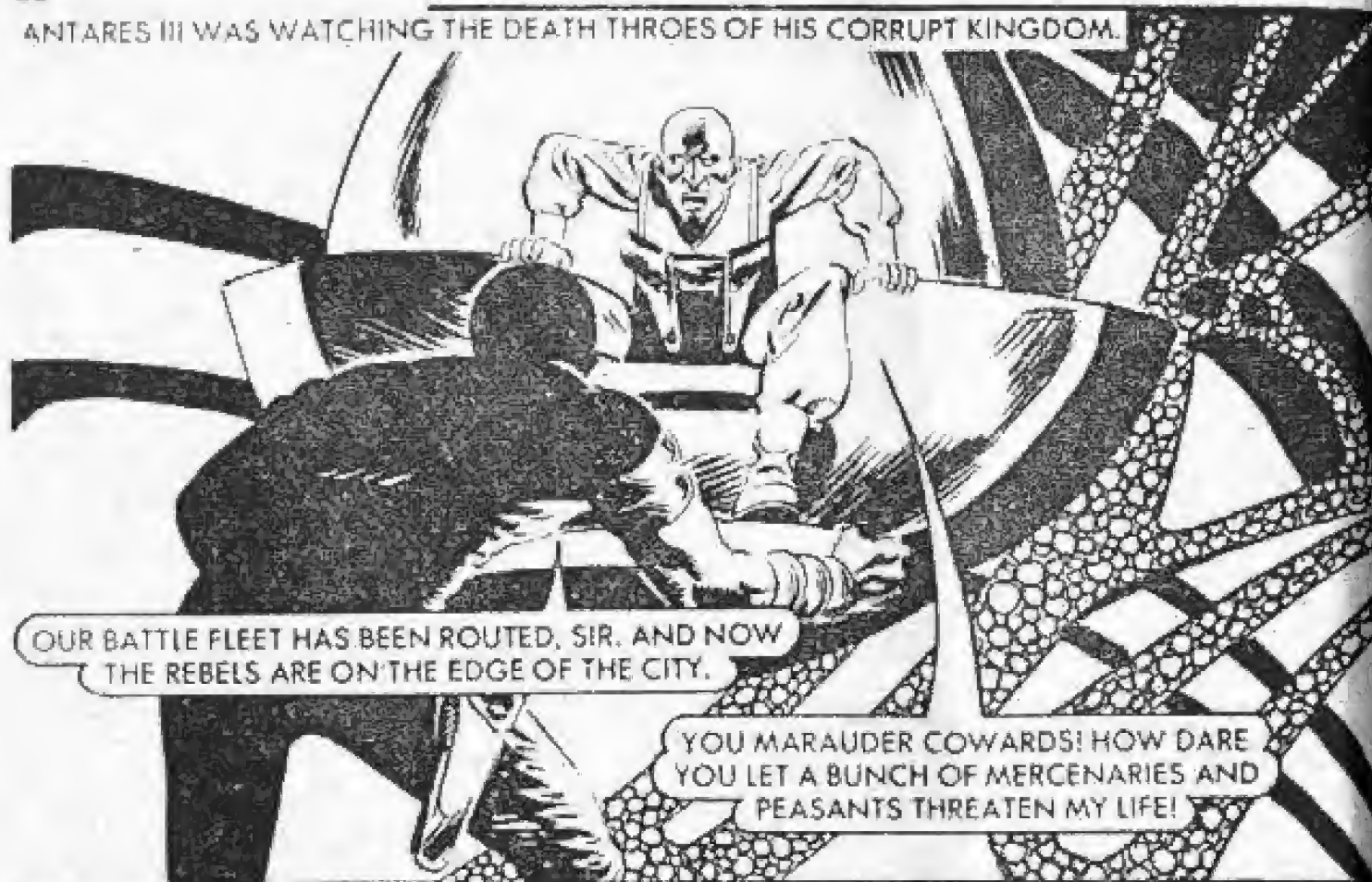
LEAVE THEM. WE'VE GOT AN APPOINTMENT ON
DEAS—AND WE DON'T WANT TO KEEP OUR
TYRANT FRIEND WAITING.

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I JUST HOPE THOSE REBELS HAVE MANAGED TO
KNOCK OUT THE MISSILE SILOS. THOSE ARE
THE ONLY THINGS THAT CAN STOP US NOW.

MEANWHILE, ON THE PLANET'S SURFACE ...

DEATH TO THE TYRANT ANTARES!

ANTARES III WAS WATCHING THE DEATH THROES OF HIS CORRUPT KINGDOM.



OUR BATTLE FLEET HAS BEEN ROUTED, SIR. AND NOW THE REBELS ARE ON THE EDGE OF THE CITY.

YOU MARAUDER COWARDS! HOW DARE YOU LET A BUNCH OF MERCENARIES AND PEASANTS THREATEN MY LIFE!



LOOKS LIKE OUR LITTLE ARRANGEMENT IS OFF, ANTARES. AND IF I WERE YOU, I'D GET OUT OF HERE WHILE THE GOING'S GOOD. WHY NOT COME ABOARD MY SHIP AND WE'LL GIVE YOU OUR PROTECTION IN THE FORBIDDEN ZONE?

NEVER! AM I TO RUN AWAY FROM THESE SWINE?

I WILL REMAIN IN MY PALACE AND
LEAD THE STRUGGLE.

PLEASE YOURSELF! I'M GOING TO SHUTTLE OUT
OF HERE — NOW.



BACK IN SPACE —

ONLY TWO MISSILES LAUNCHED. THE REBELS
MUST HAVE GOT THERE JUST IN TIME, HAMOTO.

GOOD! NOW LET'S GET DOWN TO THE
PALACE AND DETHRONE A TYRANT.



HAMOTO AND HIS MERCENARIES SWOOPED DOWN LIKE AVENGING ANGELS.



HAMOTO AND MARK LEFT THE CRAFT AND SPRINTED FOR COVER.







HAMOTO ISSUED THE
ANCIENT SAMURAI
CHALLENGE.

HO! I AM HAMOTO,
THE SAMURAI, AND A
MATCH FOR ANY
MAN. SEND OUT YOUR
BEST WARRIORS SO
THAT I MAY SLAY
THEM.



THE PALACE GUARDS RAN INTO A ONE-MAN-ARMY!





THE MARAUDER LEADER WAS TRYING TO ESCAPE—



MARK AND THE OTHERS HAD REACHED THE MAIN CONTROL ROOM DEEP UNDERNEATH THE PALACE.

IF ANTARES IS IN THERE HE'LL KNOW BY NOW THAT IT'S ALL OVER.

YES, SO WE'D BETTER BE CAREFUL. A TRAPPED ANIMAL ALWAYS FIGHTS THE HARDEST.



DEATH TO THE TYRANT.





THAT NIGHT—

IT'S A PITY YOU CAN'T STAY AND HELP US REBUILD OUR CITY. THERE ARE STILL BANDS OF RENEGADE SOLDIERS RUNNING ABOUT.

YOU CAN DEAL WITH THEM. OUR JOB IS OVER—AND NOW IT'S UP TO YOU.

THOSE YOU MANAGE TO CAPTURE ALIVE WILL BE TRIED UNDER THE FEDERATION CODE OF LAW. IF I HEAR THAT WE'VE REPLACED ANTARES WITH ANOTHER TYRANT THEN I'LL BE BACK—TO KILL YOU.





I ALWAYS THOUGHT MERCENARIES
WORKED FOR THE HIGHEST BIDDER.

SOME DO. I WORK FOR THE OPPRESSED
AND DOWNTRODDEN—FOR RIGHT.



TWO SHUTTLES HAD LANDED ON DEAS —BUT
THREE TOOK OFF.

I RECKON IT'S TIME I LEFT YOU,
HAMOTO. MY FIRST PRIORITY IS TO
TRACK THOSE MARAUDERS DOWN.

I WISH YOU LUCK. IT MIGHT
TAKE A LIFETIME TO CATCH UP
WITH THEM IN THIS GALAXY.



AS THEY PREPARED TO LEAVE ORBIT —

I'VE GOT A CONTACT—SMALL.
READS LIKE A SHUTTLE-CRAFT. IT'S
HEADING FOR SECTOR ALPHA 880.

LET'S FIND OUT WHO IT IS. COULD
BE SOME OF ANTARES' MEN MAKING
A RUN FOR IT.

THEY PICKED UP THE CRAFT ON LONG RANGE SENSORS.



IT'S A MARAUDER SHIP!

LOOKS LIKE YOUR WISH HAS COME TRUE, MARK.
NOW WE'LL SEE HOW GOOD THEY ARE.



FIGHTING CONFIGURATION! WE'LL
KEEP ON THE BLIND SIDE OF THAT
MOON—THAT WAY HE WON'T
SPOT US ON HIS SENSORS UNTIL
IT'S TOO LATE.

AS THE MARAUDER SHIP APPEARED—



HE'S SEEN US!

IT'S UP TO YOU NOW, KID.



BUT THE MARAUDER WASN'T GOING TO GIVE UP WITHOUT A FIGHT.



MARK PROVED HE WAS THE BETTER PILOT WITH A SPECTACULAR DISPLAY OF FLYING SKILL.



NEAT, KID. I'VE KNOCKED HIS POWER PLANT OUT. HIS ENGINES ARE USELESS. NOW WE CAN BOARD HIM AT LEISURE.

IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG TO CUT A HOLE IN THE SIDE OF THE SHIP, AND ENTER THE AIRLOCK.



I WANT ONE ALIVE.

THE MARAUDERS WERE NO MATCH FOR HAMOTO AND MARK.



NO YOU DON'T!

TAKE IT EASY, KID. WE WON'T GET MUCH SENSE
OUT OF HIM IF YOU SCRAMBLE WHAT FEW
BRAINS HE'S GOT!



BACK ABOARD HAMOTO'S SHIP



A SHORT WHILE LATER—



ONE OF YOUR FRIENDS TALKED. ALL I'VE GOT TO DO NOW IS PUNCH THE INFORMATION INTO OUR NAVIGATIONAL COMPUTER, THEN WE'LL PAY THIS BIG CHIEF OF YOURS A VISIT.

YOU'RE BLUFFING!

AS THEY ENTERED THE FORBIDDEN ZONE—



THE INSTRUMENTS ARE PLAYING UP, BUT WE'VE STILL GOT CONTROL.

THE SCIENTISTS RECKON IF WE GET TOO CLOSE TO THE BLACK HOLE WE'LL BE PULLED APART. AND IT LOOKS LIKE WE MIGHT BE PUTTING THAT THEORY TO THE TEST—UNLESS ONE OF THOSE JOKERS REALLY CRACKS UP.



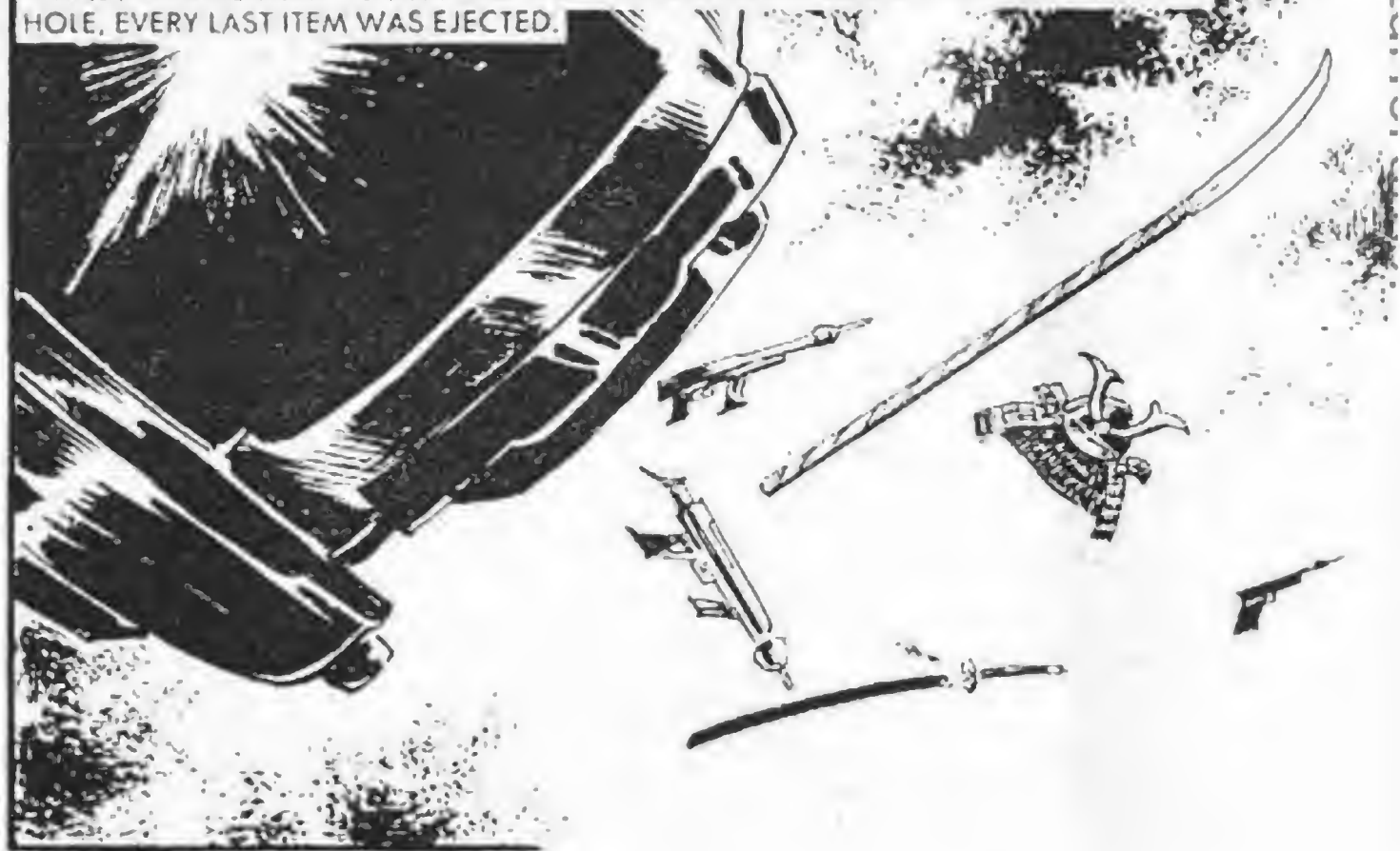
THE CORRECT CO-ORDINATES WERE PUNCHED IN—



I'M USING FULL POWER BUT
IT'S ONLY HOLDING US HERE!

WE'LL HAVE TO JETTISON
EVERYTHING BUT THE BARE
ESSENTIALS! IT'S OUR ONLY
CHANCE.

WHILE MARK FOUGHT TO KEEP THE SHIP FROM BEING PULLED CLOSER TO THE BLACK HOLE, EVERY LAST ITEM WAS EJECTED.





AN ASTEROID—THAT'S THEIR BASE. ONLY THIS ONE'S
MAN MADE. WE USED THEM DURING THE GALACTIC
WAR.

YEAH, AND THEY WERE
ALWAYS HEAVILY ARMED.

THEY'VE SPOTTED US!

BUT TOO LATE! WE'RE GOING TO BLAST THAT
THING OPEN.



USING PHOTON BOLTS AND HIGH ENERGY GAMMA-RAY LASERS, THE STARSHIP BLEW A GAPING HOLE IN THE ASTEROID.



THERE'S OUR WAY IN!

THEY USED THEIR JET PACKS TO THE ASTEROID.

PITY WE HAD TO DITCH THE SHUTTLE.
I FEEL A MITE EXPOSED OUT HERE.

THERE'S NO NEED TO. I RECKON THAT
BLAST KNOCKED OUT ALL THEIR OUTER
DEFENCES.





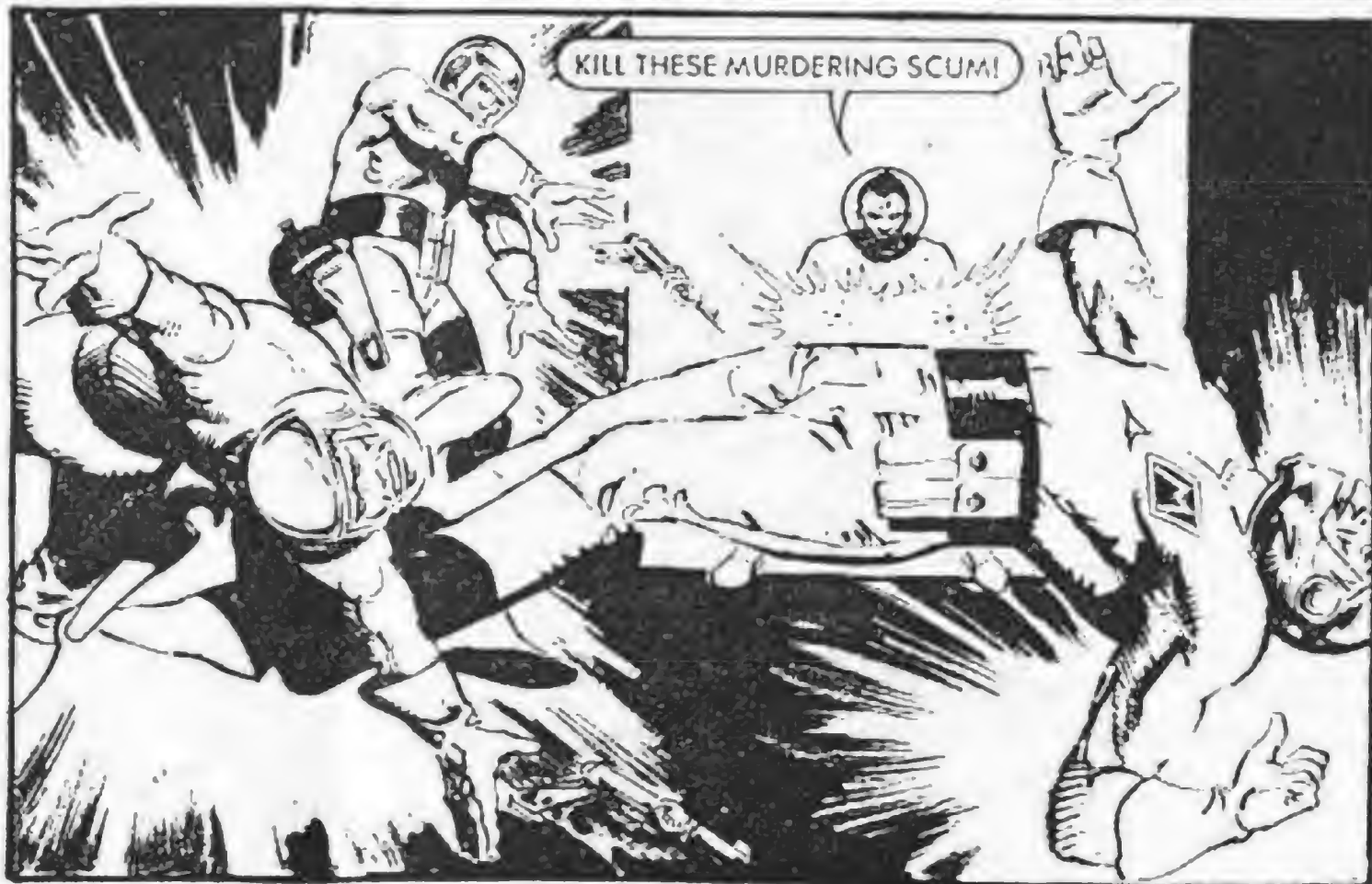


THE HOLD WAS FLOODED WITH OXYGEN.



MARK COULD DO LITTLE BUT WATCH THEM LEAVE TO DO BATTLE WITH THE MARAUDERS.







YOUR LEADER—WHERE IS HE?
TALK, OR I'LL OPEN YOU UP!

SPARE ME, SAMURAI. HE'S GONE
TO THE SHUTTLE-CRAFT BAY!



HAMOTO FOUND HIS WAY TO THE SHUTTLE BAY.

I JUST HOPE I'M IN TIME. IF HE'S
ALREADY OPENED THAT OUTER
HATCH HE'LL BE AWAY IN SPACE.



THE SHUTTLE CRAFT HADN'T HAD TIME TO ENTER THE ESCAPE TUNNEL.

IT'S ALL OVER! THROW OUT
YOUR WEAPONS AND SURRENDER.



Join our
StarForce
unions!

WHEN THE HATCH OPENED—

I'M UNARMED!

BY MY ANCESTORS! HARATO... MY
LONG LOST COUSIN. SURELY IT CAN'T BE
YOU...



I, HARATO, AM THE LEADER OF THE MARAUDERS. I COULD NOT
BE A SAMURAI LIKE YOU, SO I ORGANISED MY OWN CODE...
OF DEATH AND DESTRUCTION.



LISTEN, WE CAN WORK TOGETHER—YOU AND I.
THE SECRET OF THE FORBIDDEN ZONE CAN
STILL BE OURS ALONE.



YOU ARE EVIL HARATO... AND I SHOULD
KILL YOU, BUT YOU ARE OF MY OWN
BLOOD...

HARATO TUGGED BEGGINGLY AT HAMOTO'S CLOTHING—



HAMOTO FELL—

WHAT THE...

DID YOU REALLY THINK I WAS
UNARMED? THIS RING HAS A
MERCURIC NEURON RAY. IN A FEW
MOMENTS YOU WILL BE DEAD.

join our staff

YOUR FRIEND WILL NOT SEE ME—
UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE!



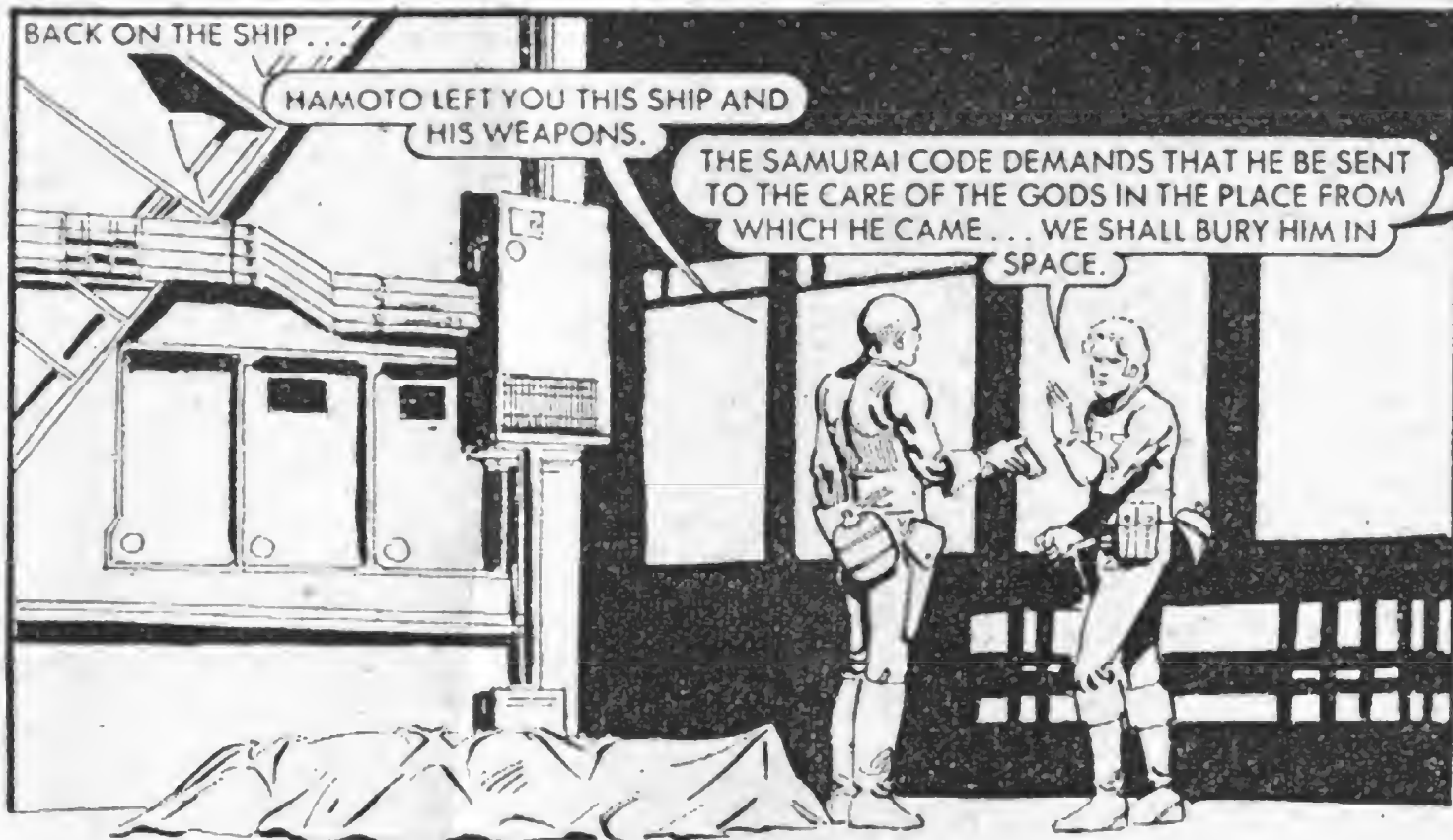
THE GALAXY HAS NOT
HEARD THE LAST OF HARATO!





THE MERCENARIES ARRIVED TO FIND MARK KNEELING BY HAMOTO'S BODY.






GOODBYE, HAMATO. I HEARD THERE WAS A TYRANT OUT IN THE ALPHA-PROXIMA SYSTEM. YOU WOULD HAVE LIKED TO GET YOUR HANDS ON THAT ONE. YOU, MARK, WOULDN'T BE INTERESTED NOW THAT THE MARAUDERS ARE FINISHED. YOU'LL BE GOING BACK TO YOUR JOB ON THE FREIGHT LINES.

I, MARK, HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT THAT...





HO! I AM MARK KRANE, THE SAMURAI, AND A
MATCH FOR ANY MAN! SEND OUT YOUR BEST
WARRIORS SO THAT I MAY SLAY THEM.

SO THE CODE OF THE SAMURAI WAS PRESERVED.
JUST AS HAMOTO HAD CONTINUED THE LINE, SO WOULD MARK KRANE,
UNTIL IT WAS TIME TO HAND HIS WORDLY GOODS TO HIS SUCCESSOR.

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IT'S OUT OF THIS WORLD



THIS MONTH'S OTHER ACTION-
PACKED STORY—NOW ON SALE



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STARBLAZERS EARTH SATELLITES 2

Early Bird, launched on April 6, 1965 heralded the era of the International Television Satellites (INTELSAT). The Intelsat range have the capability of handling over 6000 voice circuits or 12 TV channels. Intelsat 5, launched late in 1980 (illustrated here) handles 12,000 two-way telephone calls and two TV channels. Launched by America.